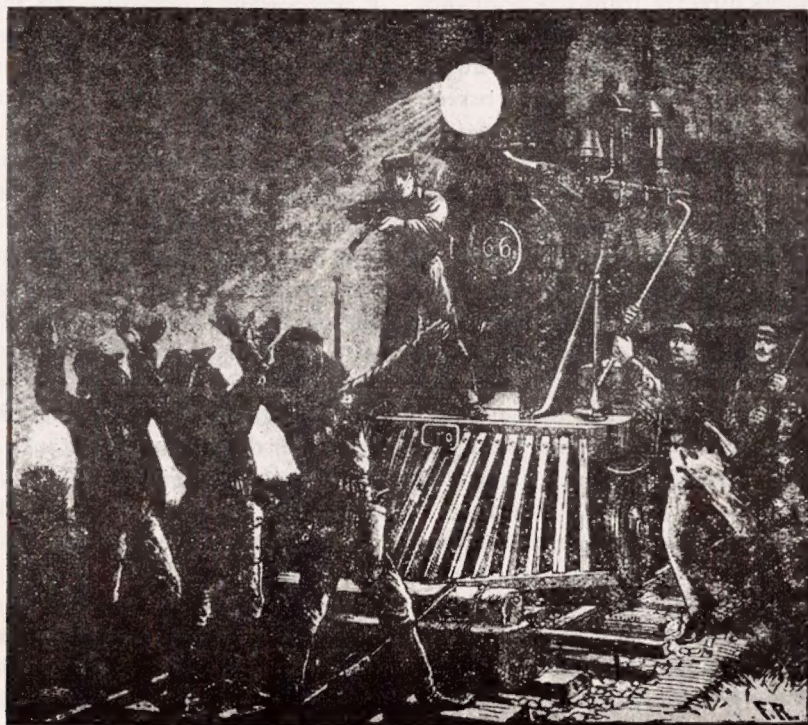


MAY, 1931

RECKLESS RALPHS

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE HAPPY HOURS BROTHERHOOD



HOW WE DID IT IN 1894 (SEE PAGE 5)

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«TREAT 'EM TENDERLY, PARD»

By FRED T. SINGLETON

As a raw recruit in the ranks of the admirers and collectors of the old-time story papers and nickel-dime novels and a new member of the Happy Hours Brotherhood, I have been trying to grab off nearly everything which

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Whole No. 5.

has been offered to me recently in the way of copies of the favorite sheets of my boyhood days. I have suddenly discovered a great big soft spot in my heart for the Boys of New York and some of the glorious old romances and comics in the Five Cent Wide Awake Library, both published by the immortal Frank Tousey in the eighties and nineties. For five or six years as a youngster I never missed an issue of the Boys of New York (1885-1891,) and had them all stacked up in my room with piles of the stories in the Wide Awake Library published during the same period and earlier, for I was always buying lots of five or ten of the most thrilling titles of the earlier numbers directly from the publisher. It was always a thrilling day for me in the Kansas town in which I lived when one of these packages of immaculately clean and uncut back numbers of the Wide Awake Library arrived from 34 and 36 North Moore Street, New York. I had many other story papers and libraries, but the two I have named were my favorites.

I was about seven years old when I read my first nickel-dime novel, a marvelously romantic tale of a phantom headless horseman, but it was not until a year or two later that the story papers and novels of the day started to pile up in my room at home. Even at that tender age I was fussy and cranky about keeping my files and runs in perfect condition. A torn or badly soiled copy was immediately replaced by a new one bought directly from the publisher. I was humored in this at home, being the only boy at that time in the family. When they cleaned out my room my mother always saw to it that the broom went around the stacks of papers and libraries very gently. No one ever thought of moving or disturbing the stacks piled up all around the walls. I always started a stack with one of those wonderfully smooth pieces of thin pine, adorned with brightly colored glazed paper at the ends, which the town dry-goods store threw out in the back alley, and which formed the core of bolts of cloth and dress goods. This kept the bottom copy in the stack perfectly flat and prevented possible damage should water or liquid of any kind be spilled accidentally on the floor.

But you know how it is : At fifteen I crashed the grown-up world of romantic fiction peopled by writers like Alexandre Dumas, Charles Dickens, Victor Hugo, Eugene Sue, Robert Louis Stevenson and other great stars of romantic literature, and began to "high hat" the brave and dashing paper pals who had stood so steadfastly beside me in my earlier years, making a tremendous and valuable contribution to the development of my imagination, for I was destined to follow a career in the graphic arts later in life. But in the nineties, when a boy reached that stage in his mental growth when the Three Musketeers, David Copperfield, Les Misérables, Wandering Jew, or Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde could be read and enjoyed, with their literary pyrotechnics and diversions sometimes suspending action for pages at a time, it was pretty hard to satisfy him any longer with stories written by

the glowworms of North Moore Street. I am ashamed to admit that at this day I cannot even remember what became of all those stacks of novels and story papers in my room. I never even missed them.

But forty years makes a lot of difference sometimes. You would have thought so in my case could you have seen me at home last Sunday afternoon working over a torn and weather-beaten old copy of the *Boys of New York*, trying with transparent paper and thin rubber cement to salvage what was left of it, and to restore its torn pages to something more like a specimen of the printer's art than a paper waif from the city's streets. For this tattered fragment was what was left of one of those copies in that stack which I abandoned to its fate in my room back in 1891. Every page—every story and illustration—looked like an old friend. It was good to get another look at it again after all these years. It was the first copy of my favorite story paper offered to me after I had put up my wants to some of the members of the Happy Hours Brotherhood, and was sold to me cheaply for just what it was, a copy in fair shape, stamped. I had no complaint to make. I was glad to get a copy in any condition just to see what the old-timer looked like, but I had been unable to erase from my memory those fine, perfect copies in the old stacks I left behind me, and the sight of this wreck of what had once been a copy of one of the grandest story papers ever printed in any language, was a shock indeed.

As all you regulars know, *Boys of New York* is an eight-page paper, nearly the size of a daily newspaper. Handling half of it at a time, I spread the two four-page sections out flat in a double spread on two large sheets of heavy artist's illustration board such as is used by artists and designers on which to paint in colors or wash, or to mount photographs in groups for retouching or special background work. This board is backed on both sides with paper of equal substance, so that it remains perfectly flat as long as nothing is pasted to it. Gradually smoothing and pressing out the wrinkles I soon had the story paper sheets gently stretched out and held firmly all around with flat stamp hinges (the best peelable kind,) just a bit of the gummed side of the hinge attached to the paper, and the rest to the board. Then, after putting a few sheets of newspaper on top of each board for protection, I put the two boards with their precious mountings under the rug in the living-room, where everybody in the house could walk over them for a few days.

Finally, Sunday afternoon, with long strips and large squares of thin, transparent paper (same as Dennison's tape, but without gum,) a can of rubber cement and a good brush, I proceeded to patch up that old story paper relic of the eighteen-eighties so that it looked good enough to exhibit as a rare museum piece, being rather handy about such things from having

PRIZE PACKAGES OF NICKEL NOVELS

By Frank T Fries

I have three bound volumes of nickel novels that I consider prizes, and I wouldn't part with them under any consideration. The Handsome Harry volume, I procured twenty years ago. It consists of the entire issue of this library. I was going to say "series," but it is not a series; it is a "serial."

There are 16 numbers, each one is an installment of a 16-part story and there are 32 pages in each number. It is the longest nickel novel story ever published. This library was published over thirty years ago. Before that time the story: "Handsome Harry, of the Fighting Belvidere," was started as a serial in "Boys of New York" story paper and continued in "Happy Days." It was originally published in England.

Bill Grunt, a sailor, Ching Ching, a Chinaman and Sampson, a colored man, furnished lots of comedy throughout the story, which dealt with a young fellow named "Handsome Harry," who had been wronged by the villain, whom he chased all over the seas and in many foreign lands, with the aid of his friends and the ship "Belvidere." At last he killed the villain, but was himself captured and tried as a pirate. Of course, he was found not guilty and everything ended right.

Another of my prized volumes contains the first 26 numbers of "Frank Reade Library." These stories are all about marvelous inventions, such as: Steam men, steam horses, electric submarine boats, air ships, overland cars, and so forth. The first story of Frank Reade was originally printed in early numbers of "Boys of New York," and was entitled: "Frank Reade's Steam Man of the Plains; or, The Terror of the West." It was later reprinted in the library, as was also the first Frank Reade, Jr., story. Both stories are contained in the bound volume.

These early Frank Reade stories were usually about Indian fighting. Our hero and his two servants, Barney, the Irishman and Pomp, the coon, would travel on the great plains, rescuing maidens in distress, covered wagon parties or anyone else in danger from Indians or outlaws. The steam man would charge right into the mob and, while Pomp did the driving, Frank and Barney would pepper away with their Winchesters through loop holes in the bullet-proof netting which completely covered the carriage that was hitched to the steam man or horse and in which our friends rode with all the comforts of home. They accounted for more Indians than Buffalo Bill ever dreamed of.

My other prized volume contains Nos. 1 to 26 of Pluck and Luck, and it is made up of adventure stories of all kinds.

HOW WE DID IT IN 1894

(See cover illustration)

Not much courtesy shown the masked gangsters in 1894. Dick, the young engineer, was too quick for them. They were totally unprepared for his sudden appearance upon the cowcatcher from the cab, rifle at his shoulder, shouting: "Hands up, or you'die!" A grand old Tousey wood-cut from "Happy Days," No. 7, December 1, 1894.

:o:

Fellow members, we owe our thanks to Fred T. Singleton, 25 E. Palmer Ave., Detroit, Michigan. At great personal expense he had made the fine heading for our magazine, which you see at the top of the front cover, and the copper-plate halftone cut which also appears on page one. He has even furnished the coated paper for this edition and sends his best wishes to the members of The Happy Hours Brotherhood.—Ralph F. Cummings, Pub.

:o:

FRANK READE, Jr., DOES SOME *REAL* TRAVELING

By Frank T Fries

About four years ago I bought a dozen "Frank Reade Weekly Magazines" of Bob Smeltzer for 75c each, which was exactly 15 times the original price 20 years before that. After reading them I found that Fred Lee had some other novels I wanted, so I traded the Reades to him. Then he discovered that Smeltzer, the original possessor, had something he wanted, so back went the Reades to Bobbie. Next, Ralph Cummings traded them away from Bob, and just last week I purchased them from Reckless Ralph for \$1.50 per each, just twice what they set me back four years ago and 30 times what they would have cost 24 years ago. Does anyone want to buy them from me? Try an' get em! Frankie is staying in Orrville, Ohio, From Now On!

NOVEL-NOVELTY OFFER We will send you "Midget Monthly Magazine" for a year, two 25c novelties and two 25c novels for 65 cts. Less than half price. Send Today. Frank T Fries, Orrville, Ohio.

FOR SALE: Frank Reade L'by. Blood and Thunder L'by, 10c each, Midget Monthly Magazine, 35c Yr. Samples of all 20c. 250 full size letterheads and 250 envelopes, printed, your copy, \$2.15, all postpaid.

FRANK T. FRIES
ORRVILLE, OHIO

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Marvelous, Valuable Books!

	Regular	Sale
"The Steam Man".....	50c	10c
"The Steam Horse".....	25c	10c
"The New Steam Man"...	25c	10c
Frank Reade, Jr., at the South Pole, or "The Green Skinned Men"...	10c	
Frank Reade, Jr.'s New Electric Air- ship, or "The Pre-Historic People of the Plateau", worth 25c...	10c	
"Frank Reade, Jr., and the Desert Treasure"	10c	

FRANK T. FRIES
ORRVILLE, OHIO

DIME NOVEL ROUNDUP

The official organ of the
Happy Hours Brotherhood
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Change of copy allowed.

Subscription—Is included with
membership to Happy Hours
Brotherhood. Others 50c per
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Remit by check or money order
in advance.

Back Numbers 10c per copy.

STOP! LOOK! LISTEN!

We need several copies of the for-
mer numbers of weeklies, including:
Wild West, Tip Top, Secret Service
James Boys, Blue and Gray, and
Boys of '76. **ART LIBRARY,**
Arlie Kinkade, Mgr., Graysville, O.

WANTED

Cavalier, Norfolk, Va.,
Seven Arts Magazine,
Balzac Library, daily, 1900,
M'lle New York,
Crane, Red Badge, 1895,
Last Words, 1902. Open Boat, '98
Maggie, by Johnston Smith,
On Going to Church, 1896,
Monsieur Beaucaire, 1900,
Gypsy Trail, Philistine, Oct., 1896
and Jan., 1897.

BOOK EXCHANGE

Station A. Toledo, Ohio.

WANTED

Golden Hours, containing the story:
Bob Nelson's Telegraph Line. Pub.

Will exchange Tip Top, Old Sleuth
Diamond Dick, Young Rover, Nick
Carter, Young Klondike, Three
Chums, etc. Send for My List of
duplicates and wants.

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WANTED

Large size Old Cap Collier, Capt.
Kidd's Treasure, A Mystery Bare-
hold Statue, Opeechie, The Robin
in Nickel Library, The Boys' Own,
Pub. in Boston, Mass., 1873-1876.
The Weeklist, Pub. in Chicago, Ill.
1877 to 1882. **WM. J. BENNERS,**
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◆ Box Paper ◆ St. James Size ◆

Good quality, cloth finish, white
paper. 24 sheets of paper and 24
envelopes, pointed flaps. Your
name and address printed on same,
in black ink, and sent postpaid, for

60c

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Dept. 1

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**I NEED MANY NUMBERS
OF THESE:**

Street & Smith Weeklies: Buffalo
Bill Stories, Diamond Dick, Jr.,
New Nick Carter, Nick Carter
Stories, Rough Rider, Bowery Boy,
Jesse James Stories, Frank Tousey
Weeklies: Wild West Weekly.

SEND LIST

Good exchange made, or will pay cash.

J. EDWARD LEITHEAD

5018 Catharine-st, Philadelphia, Pa.

TREAT 'EM GENTLY, PARD! (continued from page 3)

done a lot of photograph mounting and special work of a similar nature for many years. Its former owner would never recognize it now!

I know that most of the regulars of the Happy Hours Brotherhood have big collections, and that it is impossible for them to spend an entire Sunday afternoon patching up and old story paper in poor condition and worth only fifteen or twenty cents at the present market. But copies of these old papers are getting scarcer every year, and some of the best of them are literally crumbling to pieces. Is it not worth while to try to preserve them to thrill at least one more generation, or to fill out a run of good copies yet to be uncovered in some old attic?

—:o:—

NOTICE! Every member of the H. H. B., having read the two fine articles by Gilbert Patten in the Saturday Evening Post of February 28 and March 7, 1931, should surely be inclined to write a letter of appreciation to Mr. Horace Lorimer, Editor of the Post, Philadelphia, Pa. It might be the means of having more articles published on the same subject, from the pen of our good friend, Patten.

—:o:—

PARTIAL LIST OF 1931 MEMBERS OF H. H. B.

- No. 21. F. P. Pitzer, 41 Woodlawn Ave., Jersey City, N. J.
- 23. Charles H. Austin, 2241 N. 29th St., Philadelphia, Pa.
- 24. James Madison, 465 S. Detroit St., Los Angeles, Calif.
- 25. L. Morgan, 3018 25th St., N. E., Washington, D. C.
- 29. T. J. O'Conner, North Hartland, Vermont.
- 31. Charles Bragin, 1525 W. 12th St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

—:o:—

NOVEL SKETCHES, No. 5

Dawley's New War Novels: Size $4\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$, 92 to 100 pages, sold for 25c. Pub. by T. R. Dawley, 13-15 Park Row, N. Y., in 1865. Some had yellow covers, Here are a few of the titles:

- No. 1. "Mosely, the Guerrilla."
- 2. "Pauline, the Female Spy."

—:o:—

LAST CALL!

Do you boys want a 1931 "Novel Hunter's Year Book?" If so, send ads., etc., in before June 1st. If not, it will be discontinued.

Ad. rates: Per word, 2c; quarter page, 35c; half page, 65c; full page, \$1.00. Rush everything to the Publisher.

DECEASED

Arnold Bennett, noted author, one of the greater literary figures of the present, died March 26, at the age of 63, of typhoid fever. He has written about 30 novels and a dozen plays in his colorful career. Some of his novels were: "Old Wives," "Buried Alive," "Hilda Lessways," "Clayhanger" and "The Roll Call."

Marcus Dome, 80, Custer soldier, is dead. He was a veteran Indian fighter and a member of the United States cavalry that was hurrying to the scene when General Custer's division was massacred by the Sioux, in 1876.

:o:

NOTICE!

Do you boys want a standard nickle and dime novel catalog, like Scott has for stamp collectors? If so, write a letter to the publisher.

:o:

GILBERT PATTEN STILL WITH US

By Robert H. Smeltzer

In the Saturday Evening Post of February 28 and March 7, 1931, Mr. Gilbert Patten (pen name, Burt L. Standish, of Frank Merriwell fame) proved to us that he is by no means a departed spirit from the world of dime noveldom.

It will be a long time before two such wonderful articles appear again; reading matter touching on the high-lights of the good old dime novel days; illustrations never before seen.

No member of the Brotherhood should be without these two issues. These articles are gems of purest ray serene.

I feel that we must all agree that Gilbert Patten is at this time our "*One Best Bel.*"

:o:

Sam Canterman and Edw. Klein, of Pittsburgh, Pa., spent a couple of days recently with Frank T Fries, of Orrville, Ohio, looking over Fries' collection of novels, etc., and seeing how the "Dime Novel Roundup" is "set up" and printed.

:o:

THIS AND THAT

Robert Ripley in his inimitable cartoons, "Believe it or Not," tells us that "Kit Carson fought a mountain lion 'hand to claws' and won." Carson has been credited in the old Beadle tales with even more astonishing feats than this. Kit, looking at the illustration on one of these old tales, showing the famous scout fighting and killing five or six Indians, while supporting a fainting maiden with one hand, is said to have remarked: "That there might have happened, but I haint got no recollection on it."

W. B. McCafferty